

RESTORING THE ANCESTRY OF WALTER¹ ASTON OF CHARLES CITY COUNTY, VIRGINIA

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The goal of scholarly pursuit in almost any discipline is to marshall the best available evidence and draw the soundest conclusions that can be formed from that evidence. In genealogy, each conclusion is subject to the possibility that new evidence may surface that would necessitate a reassessment. The best approach is to make a reasonably exhaustive search for available and relevant evidence, then to formulate and weigh all possible explanatory hypotheses, drawing conclusions based on the best fit of evidence, with the understanding that the process may need to be repeated.

A circumstantial origin of the Virginia immigrant Walter¹ Aston was widely circulated by the mid-twentieth century. He was plausibly presumed to be the youngest son of Walter Aston, gent., of Longdon, Staffordshire, found in a pedigree in the 1633–35 Visitation of London, where his youngest son, Walter, was stated to be then in the “West Indies”—a term which could encompass Virginia in the early days of the colonies. The same visitation pedigree shows this family as derived from a gentry family of Tixall, Staffordshire, which has been further traced to include royal descents.¹

So things stood, when an estate record was discovered which, when carefully considered, brought this presumed identity into doubt.² The proceeding concerned the estate of Walter Aston of Longdon, Staffordshire, on which administration was granted on 25 January 1646/7 to his son and namesake, Walter. The estate file includes notice that the son Walter died

¹ The visitation pedigree is in Joseph Jackson Howard and Joseph Lemuel Chester, eds., *The Visitation of London . . . 1633, 1634, and 1635*, 2 vols. Harleian Soc. Pubs., 15, 17 (London, 1880–83), 1:29. The Virginian is connected to it in John Bennett Boddie, *Virginia Historical Genealogies* (Redwood City, Calif., 1954), 272–78, who also traces royal descents, which were reprinted in Frederick L. Weis, *Magna Charta Sureties, 1215*, 1st ed. (Boston, 1955), line 101, and various subsequent compilations.

² Paul C. Reed, “The False English Origin of Lieutenant-Colonel Walter Aston of Charles City County, Virginia,” TAG 76(2001):234–36.

before he could take administration of the estate, which was instead assumed by a son-in-law of the elder Walter.

The dissonance presented by this estate record was that the Virginian died in 1656, a decade after the date on which the younger Walter Aston in the estate record was said to have died. This appeared to show that these two Walters of the estate record and the London visitation were *not* the Virginian and his father. Could one consider that an honest mistake may have been made by his sister and brother-in-law, presuming the younger Walter dead while in fact he was still alive in Virginia? Or did they perpetrate a fraud on the probate court by declaring him to be dead and assuming administration? Such a fraud might be plausible in a large court where the family was not well known—a court which covered a whole diocese or much of the country—but this estate record was in a “peculiar,” a special ecclesiastical court which, in this case, served a solitary parish. It seemed highly improbable that in a single-parish peculiar a fraud concerning one of the gentry families of that parish could have stood for a decade. Walter Aston of Virginia was a reasonably prominent planter and burgess, who almost certainly had mercantile interests that would keep him in regular communication with England over that decade.

To challenge this implication of the estate record and retain the presumption that Walter Aston in the “West Indies” in the 1633–35 visitation *was* the Virginia immigrant, one would have to postulate *two* pairs of fathers and sons named Walter Aston in the rural parish of Longdon, Staffordshire, both gentlemen, but not distinguished from each other in known records—two pairs of Walters who belonged to the small elite residing in the same parish over the same period of time. No parish registers survive for Longdon for this period, but a search of lay subsidies revealed no residents with the surname *Aston* at Longdon whose personal wealth reached the threshold of taxation (as would normally be expected of a gentleman).³ The 1641 Protestation Return, which lists all adult male inhabitants in any parish for which it survives, records only *one* set of men named Walter Aston, older and younger, at Longdon.⁴ The simplest conclusion from the estate record and due diligence in available Longdon records was that there was only one

³ Simon R. Neal searched the following Longdon lay subsidies at The National Archives, U.K. [TNA]: E 179/178/281 (1610: 19 names), E 179/178/282 (1611: 17 names), E 179/178/294 (1624: 17 names), E 179/179/302 (1629: 20 names), E 179/179/304 (1628: 17 names), E 179/179/310 (1641: 14 names), E 179/179/312 (1641: 20 names), and E 179/256/24 (1647: 37 names).

⁴ Protestation Returns, 1641 (House of Lords), Longdon, Offlow Hundred, Staffordshire (list of inhabitants likely drawn up in the end of March 1642) [Family History Library (FHL), Salt Lake City, film #919510].

which was instead as-

sumes that the Virginian younger Walter Aston in fact did not show that these two men were *not* the Virginian Walter Aston in order to show that these two men were *not* the Virginian Walter Aston. This mistake may have been made by the younger Walter Aston and they perpetrate a falsehood by assuming administration where the family residence or much of the local ecclesiastical records are highly improbable for the gentry families of the Aston of Virginia who most certainly had communication with

claim the presumption of visitation was made of fathers and sons in Staffordshire, *Local* records—living in the same house for Longdon residents with the threshold. The 1641 Pro-
perty parish for Aston, older state record was only one

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contemporary pair of Walter Astons; that the young man in the “West Indies” in 1633–35 was dead by 1646; and that any claim of parentage for Walter Aston of Virginia would require a concrete explanation of the facts on hand before it could be allowed to stand.

Recently, however, a court proceeding surfaced, which reopened the case. It concerned a son-in-law of Walter Aston, gent., of Longdon, the father in the Longdon estate proceeding. Zacharie Kirke, son-in-law of Walter Aston, gent., having successfully obtained administration of Walter Aston’s estate, sued the husband of Aston’s other daughter.⁵ Discovery of this lawsuit led to a new examination of the known evidence, which in turn led to a string of new clues and additional discoveries both within and outside Longdon. With more documentation in hand, we have been able to reconstruct a much more complete picture of the Astons involved.

As previously presumed, there were not two father-son pairs of gentlemen named *Walter Aston* living contemporaneously in the parish of Longdon. But there *were* two contemporary father-son pairs named *Walter Aston* who lived at Longdon *at different times*. One pair—the pair named in the London visitation including, we may now again presume, the Virginia settler—left Longdon some years before the other father-son pair—those involved in the estate proceedings of 1646—arrived.

The Walter Aston whose estate was administered in Longdon in 1646/7, and whose son Walter did not long survive him, was originally from the parish of Standon, Staffordshire, some twenty-five miles to the northwest; he appears to have settled in Longdon only by about 1630 at the earliest—at least fifteen years after his namesake had left that parish.

Of the other father-son pair, the father, Walter Aston, appears originally to have been of Longdon. He apparently left Longdon in the 1610s, many years before his son and namesake, Walter, would venture to the “West Indies” (i.e., Virginia) in 1628. From 1610 to 1616, Walter Aston and his wife, Joyce, entered into a number of transactions by which they divested themselves of his hereditary estate in the parish of Longdon. Joyce was of a lesser social status: the daughter of a yeoman who had married a young widow with many children. Joyce’s inheritance could not be disposed of as it had not yet come into their hands. Walter and Joyce Aston lived beyond their means and were supported financially by two of their sons who had established themselves in London.

⁵ Zachary Kirke *v.* Robert Saunders and Alice, his wife. Bill (complaint) dated 21 May 1651; answer dated 19 June 1652 (TNA C 6/11/187: Court of Chancery: Six Clerks Office: Pleadings before 1714, Collins).

Walter and Joyce Aston ended their days in the borough of Leicester, where he died on 30 March 1638 and was buried in the church of Leicester St. Martin.⁶ His widow, Joyce, survived a little under two years and was buried there on 18 February 1639/40. Their faithful and loving sons Simon and Robert, both grocers of London, had by then supported their parents to the tune of "at the least" £500 over fourteen years. The eldest son, Thomas, had established himself in Ireland, where he would die in the Irish rebellion of 1641-42. The youngest son, Walter, was apparently already in Virginia.

In 1795, John Nichols, the Leicestershire historian, noted that a brass plate commemorating Walter Aston on the north wall of the Church of Leicester St. Martin "was copied at the Heralds' Visitation [of Leicestershire] in 1683; but is not now remaining." He described it thus:

Arms . . . a fess; in chief three lozenges. Crest, a bull's head couped. "Here under lieth interred the body of Walter Aston, esq. born at Longdon in Staffordshire, who had to wife Joyce, the daughter of — Nason, gent. of Rowingstone in Warwickshire, by whom he had issue five [sic] sons, viz. Edward, Thomas, Simon, and Walter; and three daughters, Joyce, Anne, and Katherine; who departed this life the 30th day of March, anno Domini 1638, and being aged . . . years."⁷

The monumental inscription explicitly names a son Walter, even though the last was not mentioned in his father's will. Walter Aston, of the parish of St. Martin, Leicester, made his will on 23 November 1637:

The name of god Amen I Walter Aston of the Burrough of Leicest[e]r in the County of Leicest[e]r gent., beeing (prayed bee god) in good and p[er]fect health yet considering the frayletie of mankinde with the certaintie of death and uncertaintie of the tyme thereof, and being willing to expresse my desire of makeing some requitall to my two most loving and kinde sonnes Simon Aston and Robert Aston for theirre greate love, care and chardge which they have beene at in keepeing and maintaineing mee and my wife (theirre mother) with all things convenient for us at all tymes as our necessities required for these fowertenne yeares last past to theirre chardges (at the least) of five hundred pounds, doe make this my last will and testament in manner and forme following First I freelye yelde my soule into the hands of my most mercifull god hoping by the alone merritts of my lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to have the free remission of all my sinnes and life everlasting, And my bodye I com[m]it to the earth from whence it was taken to be buried at the discretion of my executors hereafter named, It[e]m I give unto my loving wife (in case shee shall survive mee) All my goods Cattle and Chattele whatsoever, but if I fortune to survive and overlive her then I give and bequeath all my goods Cattle & Chattele that I shall have at the tyme of my death unto my aforesaid loving sonnes Simon and Robert and I doe make them the executors of this my last will and testament, And I doe heartilye de-

⁶ Editors' Note: The parish church of Leicester St. Martin is now a cathedral, Leicester having been established as an Anglican diocese in 1926.

⁷ John Nichols, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester*, 4 vols. in 8 (London, 1795-1815), 1:2:596. The 1683 Visitation of Leicester, which has not been published, does not include an Aston pedigree, as none of the family remained in Leicester.

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Water [sic] Aston [autograph and non-armorial seal]

Sealed and published in the presence of us John Angell Ri: Martins Samuell Wanley

M[emorandum] that at the sealeing and publishing of this will Mrs Aston wife of the aforesaid Walter Aston did desire us whose names are subscribed to testifie (if there should bee any occasion for it) that shee doeth heartilye desire that her sonne Thomas or his heire when the farme of Kingeswood specified in the aforesaid will shall come into their hands that her sonnes Simon and Robert may have some Reasonable satisfaction made unto them out of the same for the great costs and chardges that they for this long time have beene and still are at for the plentifull provideing for of her and her husband.

John Angell Ri: Martins Samuell Wanley⁸

The will does not name a son Walter, but the other family members mentioned here obviously match the Aston family of the 1633–35 Visitation of London. This testator, Walter Aston, had no money to distribute and had been financially supported by two other sons for years. It is therefore entirely consistent that another younger son—long since departed across the ocean—would not need to be named and would receive no legacy.

This new information, properly considered, not only resolves the problem of the Longdon estate record, which had cast the Virginian's presumed identity into doubt, it offers further details that are consistent with the Virginian as son of the Leicester testator and descendant of the Tixall family, as asserted in the 1633–35 Visitation of London pedigree.

⁸ Leicestershire Record Office, PR/1/249 (images, findmypast.com; inventory, PR/1/40). This will had long been sought without success. Because Walter Aston was presumed to have owned land in multiple jurisdictions, his will was expected to have been proved in the Pre-rogative Court of Canterbury [PCC] or at least in Lincoln rather than in a lower diocesan or diaconal court. At this time, the Archdeacon of Leicester reported to the Bishop of Lincoln. The Bishop of Lincoln, John Williams, had been suspended from July 1637 to August 1638, during which time Archbishop William Laud (of Canterbury) administered Lincoln's affairs. Yet it appears that while Williams was suspended, the Archdeacon of Leicester did not remand Aston's will to the PCC, but simply proved it at Leicester (see David M. Smith, *Guide to Bishop's Registers of England and Wales* [London, 1981], 24, 130, 132). Additional notations relating to the probate of this will might be found in the Bishop of Lincoln's Register (Lincolnshire Archives Office, Add. Reg. 3, "the Red Book," ff. 198–222 [May 1635 to Aug. 1641, including "much probate material"]]) or in Archbishop Laud's register at Lambeth Palace, but these were not examined.

The summaries that follow here include detailed genealogies of the *two* Walter Aston families: First, the immediate Longdon and Leicester family of the immigrant's apparent father, followed by the family of the *other* Walter Aston of Longdon, who died intestate in 1646/7.

SUMMARY: WALTER^A ASTON OF LONGDON AND LEICESTER

WALTER^A ASTON, said in his monumental inscription to be born in Longdon, Staffordshire, was identified in the 1633-34 Visitation of London as the son of Leonard Aston of Tixall, Staffordshire.⁹ He died as a resident of the borough of Leicester, co. Leicester, 30 March 1638,¹⁰ and was buried in church of Leicester St. Martin (now Leicester cathedral) on 1 or 9 April 1638.¹¹ His wife, whom he married by say 1590, was JOYCE NASON, daughter of Thomas Nason of Kingswood in Rowington, Warwickshire, and his wife Isabel Baker (married say 1571-73), daughter of Richard Baker of Rowington.¹² Isabel (Baker) (Eaton) Nason was previously married to Thomas

⁹ Howard and Chester, *Visitation of London* [note 1], 1:29; Boddie, *Virginia Historical Genealogies* [note 1], 273-74. Leonard Aston, b. by 1542, has not been researched for this article; further research on him and the Tixall line would be welcome.

¹⁰ See above and note 6.

¹¹ Leicester St. Martin, bishops' transcripts [FHL film #592560]: [1638] April [1 or 9] "Walter Ashton Gentleman was Buryed." Leicester Cathedral, accounts relating to marriages, burials, and payments to the poor, p. 722 [FHL film #1538061, item 4]: "Receipts for the Bells and Buryalls since the 27th day of March Anno dni 1638 to the 16th day of April 1639 as followeth . . . Received for the Bells for mr Walter Ashton vs. iiijd."

¹² The manor house and farmhouse of Kingswood lie in the northwest corner of Rowington, but the bulk of the manor was in the adjacent parish of Lapworth, absorbed into the Ferrers estate by that time. It was attached to the more distant manor of Wellesbourne, where the Nason family was earlier established as tenants (*Victoria History of the County of Warwick*, 8 vols. [London, 1904-69], 5:112). Thomas Nason, yeoman of Kingswood, Rowington, Warwickshire, made a will 17 Jan. 1620/1, proved 10 May 1626, by which he left his daughter Joyce Aston 10s., his daughter Elizabeth Eborall 10s., his grandchild Rebecca Eborall 25, the like to his grandchild Katherine Eborall. He mentioned John Eaton's children, Thomas Eaton's children, Jane William's children, Elizabeth Eaton (relationship unspecified), kinsman Rowland Eaton, Anne Howman, grandchild Elizabeth Warner, and servants. He gave the residue to his daughter-in-law Alice Nason [the widow of a deceased son and heir], whom he made executrix, with Robert Warner and Henrie Ebberhall of Shrewlie overseers, both of whom signed as witnesses (Consistory Court of Worcester, original wills, 1626, no. 139 [FHL film #98029]). The will is also briefly abstracted by John Brooks Threlfall, *Twenty-Six Great Migration Colonists to New England and Their Origins* (Madison, Wisc., 1993), 76a (insert between pp. 76-77). "Mris. Nason widow [i.e. Alice] was Buried August 3" 1639 in Rowington (John W. Ryland, *Registers of Rowington, co. Warwick*, Parish Register Society, 21 [London, 1899], 16). The Rowington parish registers only exist from 1638; some earlier years, 1616, 1619-24, 1628-31, 1633-37 being transcribed from the bishops' transcripts. Thomas Nason had three children, according to his will: (1) a son who predeceased him, leaving a widow, Alice, and a daughter, Elizabeth Warner, (2) a daughter Joyce Aston, and (3) a daugh-

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Eaton, by whom she was grandmother of immigrant John¹ Eaton of Salisbury and Haverhill, Massachusetts, who was therefore Walter¹ Aston's first cousin of the half blood.¹³ Joyce (Nason) Aston was buried at Leicester St. Martin on 18 February 1639/40.¹⁴

ter Elizabeth Eborall (wife of Henry Eborall of Shrewlie). Alice was bur. Rowington, 3 Aug. 1639, predeceased by her daughter Elizabeth (wife of Robert Warner Sr.), bur. there 3 Feb. 1634/5 (Warner does not appear to have been a resident of the parish). Alice Nason of Kingswood, widow, made a nuncupative will dated 8 Oct. 1638, proved 3 Oct. 1639, inventory £21 os. id. [FHL film #98058]. By this will she gave 20s. each to John, Thomas, Job, Nathaniel, Sarah, and Alice Eaton; 10s. to Anne Collett, widow; clothing to Marie Higgins; 20s. each to Thomas Smith, Alice Greene, Constance Eborall, Edward Collett, William Haines, and Marie Higgins; and 5s. to John Holder. She made her "son-in-law" Robert Warner, gent., executor; witnesses were Samuel Warner, Robert Warner, William Hains, and Anne Collett. Henry Eberhall, husbandman of Shrewley in the parish of Hatton, Warwickshire, made a will 15 March 1629/30; inventory dated 9 April 1630, appraised by John Eaton of Rowington (a later emigrant to New England—see note 12) and others. By this will, he gave his youngest daughter, Katherine Eberhall, £40, made it clear that his elder daughter, Rebecca, wife of Peerson Waite, had no children, and mentioned his brother John Eberhall and his children. John Eaton was among the witnesses (Consistory Court of Worcester, original wills 1630, no. 54 [FHL film #98037]).

¹³ On Eaton, see Douglas Richardson, "The English Origin of John¹ Eaton (1590–1668) of Salisbury and Haverhill, Massachusetts," TAG 68(1993):48–54. There is an account of Richard Baker in Threlfall, *Twenty-Six Great Migration Colonists* [note 11], 82a, abstracting his will and inventory. Richard Baker's original will is found at the Consistory Court of Worcester, 1588, #829, with bond, #854k [FHL film #97895]. The will of Thomas Atwood, Isabel's brother-in-law, made 26 Oct. 1584, proved 8 Sept. 1585, shows that Isabel m. (2) Thomas Nason (Consistory Court of Worcester, wills, 1585, no. 63 [FHL film #97931]). The will is also transcribed in full in John William Ryland, *Records of Rowington* . . . , 2 vols. (Birmingham, 1896–1922), 1:211. There was no Nason or Eaton family at Rowington in the 1524 or 1525 subsidies, which should have recorded anyone of their status (Ryland, *Records of Rowington*, 1:138–40, gives 39 names in each year, including Richard Baker, the only Baker in those subsidies). A Richard Baker appeared in records of Rowington in 1486 (with wife "Kat[her]jina"), 1492, and 1509 (Ryland, 1:19–20, 23, 213). There were earlier Bakers at Rowington recorded in the Guild of Knowle back to John Baker and his wife Emmota in 1460 (Ryland, 1:212–15). Tenements that Thomas Atwood held of the manor of Rowington were detailed in a rental dated 1561, including "in right of his wife one parcel of meadow late of William Shakyspere, called 'the Forthinge'" (Ryland, 1:154). Other relevant tenements were held by "Richard Baker's daughter . . . lately of Thomas Bucke," and by "Thomas Yeton" (Ryland, 1:156).

¹⁴ Leicester St. Martin, parish register transcripts [FHL film #833045]: 18 Feb. 1639/[40], "Mrs Joyce Asson Widdowe" buried; see also Leicester St. Martin bishops' transcripts [FHL film #592560]. Leicester Cathedral accounts relating to marriages, burials, and payments to the poor, p. 734 [note 11]: "Receipts for Bells and Buryalls Since the 16 day of April 1639 to the 7th day of April 1640 as followeth . . . Rec[eive]d for the Bells for m[ist]ris As-
son," 5s. 4d.

Walter Aston appears to have been a trustee with Humphrey Beardmore for Ralph Mynors of Hollinbury Hall in 1600.¹⁵

From 1610 to 1616, Walter Aston and his wife, Joyce, created a series of final concords for the most part disposing of his inherited lands in Longdon and nearby parishes. These transactions help explain why the Astons would uproot themselves and relocate to the city of Leicester.

[1] Five weeks from Easter Day, 8 Jac. I [ca. 12 May 1610], between Walter Aston, gent., complainant, and Sir Walter Aston, knight, and Gertrude his wife, deforciants, of 4 messuages, 4 barns, a watermill, a dovecote, 4 gardens, 4 orchards, 60 acres of land, 60 acres of meadow, 200 acres of pasture, 100 acres of wood, 4 acres of furze and heath, 6 acres of moor, and 6 acres of land covered with water in Longdon, Curborowe, Elmehurst, Kynges Bromley, and Handsacre [total, 436 acres]. Deforciants remitted all right to Walter Aston, gentleman, and his heirs, for which Walter gave them £100.¹⁶

[2] Fifteen days from Easter Day, 9 Jac. I [ca. 7 April 1611], between Thomas Sprott, gentleman, complainant, and Walter Aston, gentleman, and Joice, his wife, deforciants of a messuage, a barn, a watermill, a garden, an orchard, 20 acres of land, 40 acres of meadow, 80 acres of pasture, 20 acres of wood, 20 acres of moor, and 2 acres of land covered with water in Longdon, Curborough, and Elmehurst [total, 182 acres]. Walter and Joice remitted all right to Thomas and his heirs, for which Thomas gave them £120.¹⁷

[3] Octave of St. Michael, 9 Jac. I [ca. 6 Oct. 1611], between Edward Hill, Francis Adye, and Richard Archbolde, complainants, and Walter Aston, gentleman, and Joice, his wife, deforciants of a cottage, 10 acres of land, 14 acres of meadow, and 30 acres of pasture in Longdon [total, 54 acres]. Walter and Joice remitted all right to the complainants and to the heirs of Edward forever, for which the complainants gave them £41.¹⁸

¹⁵ Settlement to provide dower for Katherine Mynors, wife of Ralph Mynors of Hollinbury Hall, 20 April 1600: settlement by Ralph Mynors of half his goods on Walter Aston of Longdon, Staffordshire, and Humphrey Beardmore of the Beech, Staffordshire, in trust (Staffordshire Record Office, D786/33/1, abstr., TNA Discovery Catalogue, discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk). The Mynors family of Uttoxeter settled at Hollingbury Hall after it was purchased by Ralph Mynors, Citizen and Draper of London, ca. 1558–59 (Mynors Papers, Staffordshire County Record Office, D786, record introduction, abstr., TNA Discovery Catalogue).

¹⁶ *Collections for a History of Staffordshire*, new ser., 3(1900):41, part of a series of final concords (“feet of fines”) for Staffordshire from the 14th century through 1625, published serially through several volumes of the William Salt Society’s *Collections for a History of Staffordshire*. Boddie, in *Virginia Historical Genealogies* [note 1], 274, makes this erroneous statement: “In 9 James I. [1612] Walter Aston, gentleman, and Joyce, his wife, sold 54 acres of land to Edward Hill. Shortly after that Walter Aston, Knight, sold land to Walter Aston, gentleman, and Joyce his wife, 434 acres in Longdon (Salt Vol. III, N. S. p. 41).” The land conveyance noted on p. 41 was actually for 436 acres. The 54 acres would be the separate fine published on page 63 of the same volume. Boddie missed the other relevant fines published in this series; the stated year of the fine he mentions was also incorrect.

¹⁷ *Collections for a History of Staffordshire* [note 16], new ser., 3(1900):57.

¹⁸ *Collections for a History of Staffordshire* [note 16], new ser., 3(1900):63.

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[4] Octave of St. Michael, 9 Jac. I [ca. 6 Oct. 1611], between Walter Aston, gent., and William Orme, complainants, and Edward Hill and Margery, his wife, deforciants, of four acres of meadow in Longdon. Edward and Margery remitted all right to Walter and William, for which Walter and William gave them £41.¹⁹

[5] Octave of St. Michael, 9 Jac. I [ca. 6 Oct. 1611], between William Orme, complainant, and Walter Aston, gentleman, and Joice, his wife, deforciants of a messuage, 2 barns, a garden, an orchard, 20 acres of land, 20 acres of meadow, 40 acres of pasture, 20 acres of furze and heath, an acre of land covered with water, and common of pasture for all kinds of cattle in Longdon [total, 101 acres]. Walter and Joice remitted all right to William and his heirs, and covenanted that they would warrant the said tenements against the heirs of Walter Aston, knight, for which William gave them £60.²⁰

[6] Octave of St. Hillary, 11 Jac. I [ca. 18 Jan. 1613/4], between William Orme, complainant, and Walter Aston, gentleman, and Joice, his wife, deforciants of 20 acres of land, 10 acres of meadow, 40 acres of pasture, 30 acres of wood, and 60 acres of furze and heath in Kinges, Bromley and Hansacre otherwise Hansaker [total, 160 acres]. Walter and Joice remitted all right to William and his heirs, for which William gave them £100.²¹

[7] Octave of St. Michael, 12 Jac. I [ca. 6 Oct. 1614], between John Kinge, gentleman, complainant, and Walter Aston, gentleman, and Joyce, his wife, deforciants of a messuage, a barn, a dovecote, a garden, and an orchard in Longdon, and of a moiety of the free chapel of Longdon. Walter and Joyce remitted all right to John and his heirs, and covenanted that they would warrant the said tenements against Walter Aston, knight, and his heirs, for which John gave them £41.²²

[8] Octave of St. Michael, 14 Jac. I [ca. 6 Oct. 1616], between Walter Adye, complainant, and Walter Aston, gentleman, and Joyce, his wife, deforciants of 2 messuages, 2 barns, a garden, an orchard, 7 acres of land, 6 acres of meadow, 8 acres of pasture, 4 acres of wood in Longdon [total, 25 acres]. Walter Aston and Joyce remitted all right to Walter Adye and his heirs, for which Walter Adye gave them £41.²³

Walter Aston appears to have relocated to Leicestershire about the same time as this multi-phase alienation of Longdon lands. A Walter Aston, gent., of Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire, was plaintiff in two Star Chamber lawsuits in July and October 1616,²⁴ at about the same time the Sheepy Magna parish registers record the burial of Leonard Aston, gent., on 15 May 1616, who

¹⁹ *Collections for a History of Staffordshire* [note 16], new ser., 3(1900):64.

²⁰ *Collections for a History of Staffordshire* [note 16], new ser., 3(1900):64.

²¹ *Collections for a History of Staffordshire* [note 16], new ser., 4(1901):60.

²² *Collections for a History of Staffordshire* [note 16], new ser., 4(1901):73.

²³ *Collections for a History of Staffordshire* [note 16], new ser., 6:1(1903):17.

²⁴ Aston v. Farmer et al., July 1617 (TNA STAC 8/37/3, abstr. TNA Discovery Catalogue, discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk); Aston v. Manley, Oct. 1617 (TNA STAC 8/45/16, abstr. TNA Discovery Catalogue). These Star Chamber suits, as well as the Leicester monumental inscription, were also noticed by Jane Williams Flank, in a post to the Usenet group soc.genealogy.medieval on 31 Jan. 2017, as this article was going to press, arguing independently for the same conclusion we draw here.

could be Walter's father.²⁵ From about 1623 onward, Walter Aston and his wife, Joyce, were financially supported by two adult sons, Simon and Robert, who by 1633–35 were living in London. Although their domicile is not known from the 1610s to the 1630s, Walter and Joyce had likely been living in the borough Leicester for some time when he died in 1638.

Children of Walter^A and Joyce (Nason) Aston, b. presumably Longdon, co. Stafford:²⁶

- i JOYCE ASTON, b. say 1592.
- ii ANNE ASTON, b. say 1594, bur. Peckleton, Leicestershire, 19 Nov. 1649;²⁷
m. JOHN EVERARD, bur. Peckleton, 29 Oct. 1648, son of John (d. 1642)
and Jane (Maddock) Everard of Peckleton.²⁸ Only child: *Hester Everard*,
bp. Peckleton, 14 June 1616, m. Edmund Walton of Peckleton.²⁹ In 1642,
John Everard sued John Oneby and [—] Wightman concerning Peckleton.³⁰ John's brother Thomas Everard d. leaving a will dated 12 Aug.
1648, proved 15 Jan. 1649/50,³¹ in which it was noted that his brother
John owed him hundreds of pounds, and that there was a pending
Chancery suit over the debt. There was no will or administration for
Anne, but the administration of John Everard of Peckleton was granted
on 7 May 1649 to Edmund Walton and Hester Walton *alias* Everard,
the daughter of John.³²
- iii KATHERINE ASTON, b. say 1596, living 1643; m. THOMAS GERRARD,
likely the Thomas Gerrard who witnessed [his brother-in-law] Robert
Aston's will in London on 13 Dec. 1643. Children:³³ 1. *Joyce Gerrard*. 2.
Mary Gerrard. 3. *Walter Gerrard* (living as an adult in Ireland in 1642–
44).³⁴

²⁵ Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire, parish register [images, findmypast.com].

²⁶ The daughters and sons were almost certainly listed in birth order in their father's monumental inscription. The known dates of the succeeding generation suggest that the three daughters were born before the eldest son.

²⁷ Peckleton, Leicestershire, parish register transcripts, 1567–1654 [FHL film #585279].

²⁸ John Fetherston, *Visitation of the County of Leicester in the Year 1619*, Harleian Soc. Pubs., 2 (London, 1870), 142, says "Anna filia Walteri Aston de Longdon" married "Joh'es Euerard [Everard] de Pickelton fil. et hær." and had at least one child, Hester, age 3 in 1619. On the death of John Everard, the father, see TNA C7/412/52, John Everard *v.* John Oneby, [—] Wightman and others (Court of Chancery, Six Clerks Office, abstr. TNA Discovery Catalogue, discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk).

²⁹ Peckleton, Leicestershire, parish register transcripts, 1567–1654 [images, findmypast.com; also FHL film #585279]. Edmund and Hester/Ester Walton had six children bp. Peckleton: *Hester Walton*, bp. 29 April 1641, *Thomas Walton*, bp. 7 Feb. 1644/[5], *Edmund Walton*, bp. 28 Oct. 1648, *Elizabeth Walton*, bp. 18 March 1650/[1], *Everard Walton*, bp. 4 Oct. 1653, and *Judith Walton*, bp. 26 Feb. 1655.

³⁰ Everard *v.* Oneby et al. [note 28].

³¹ PCC wills, Pembroke (1650), quire 5, f. 35v [ancestry.com].

³² PCC Administration Act Books, 1649, f. 44 [FHL film #93255].

³³ Joyce and Mary were mentioned in the will of their uncle Robert Aston (below).

³⁴ "There is one Walter Gerrard, a Nephew of Captain Astons, a hopefull young man desires the Ensignes place of that Company, which I hope your L[ordsh]ip wilbe [sic] pleased to

Aston and his
Simon and Rob-
er domicile is not
likely been living

don, co. Stafford:²⁶

ure, 19 Nov. 1649;²⁷
on of John (d. 1642)
dd. Hester Everard,
ckleton.²⁸ In 1642,
concerning Peckle-
will dated 12 Aug.

that his brother
was a pending
administration for
cketon was granted
on alias Everard,

THOMAS GERRARD,
[her-in-law] Robert
Joyce Gerrard. 2.
Ireland in 1642-

in their father's
suggest that the

film #585279].

Harleian Soc.
married "Joh'es
Sor age 3 in 1619.
John Oneby,
DNA Discovery

ges, findmypast
children bp. Peck-
Edmund Walton,
bp. 4 Oct. 1653,

below).
young man de-
[?]: pleased to

- iv (Capt.) THOMAS ASTON, b. say 1597, d. by 5 Sept. 1642, when administration of his estate was granted to his son Edward;³⁵ settled by 1634 at Kilbarry, Ire., just south of Waterford. Thomas, an army officer in the English Civil War, engaged in the Irish rebellion around Waterford and Wexford and kept a diary of those events.³⁶ Embarking from Bristol on 20 Feb. 1641/2 and landing near Wexford with 200 troops, Capt. Aston engaged in sorties and skirmishes for the next several months, making his base at Fort Duncannon, but eventually he was caught off guard when engulfed in a foggy mist and was killed at Hook Head. The Irish commander Thomas Roche took Aston's head to Wexford for display as a trophy, according to the testimony of Thomas's eldest son and heir, Edward Aston.³⁷ The name of Thomas's wife is not known. Child: 1. (Maj.) Edward Aston, b. ca. 1620 (age 34 on 3 Feb. 1653/4).³⁸

confer on him for his Uncle's sake, who was a valiant gentleman, and one that endeavord to further this service as much as any, and hath lost his life therein" (Lord Esmond to Lord Ormond, quoted in Philip Herbert Hore, *History of the Town and County of Wexford . . . [London, 1904]*, 85; see also 118 [deposition dated 1 April 1644 by Walter Gerrard, ensign]).

³⁵ PCC Administration Act Book 1641-42, f. 159 [FHL film #93253].

³⁶ Thomas Aston, *Newes from the West of Ireland; relating what happened to Capt. Weldon and Capt. Aston after their passage from Bristol to the fort of Duncannon in the mouth of the river of Waterford: with many particular enterprises performed against the rebels in those parts to the terror of our enemies, the glory of God, and the honour of all brave English commanders: with a letter sent from the maior of Waterford to Captain Aston in excuse of his rebellious designes: with Captain Astons sharpe and worthy reply sent in a letter to the said maior* (London, 1642) [Early English Books Online (eebo.chadwyck.com), Wing #A4080A; Thomason Tracts #E. 142. (12)]. T[homas] Aston, *A brief relation of the late passages that happened at His Majesties fort of Duncannon, in the county of Wexford in Leinster, since the 8 of June, 1642: With the taking and burning the town and castle called Dunmore, being a place of shelter for the rebels, with divers other matters of note. Written by Captain Thomas Aston, employed in that service under command of the Lord Esmond; and by him sent to a gentleman of good credit in London* (London, 1642).

³⁷ Depositions by Edward Aston from the Irish Rebellion of 1641 are both online and in print. His deposition on 15 Dec. 1642 describes him as "Edward Aston of Kilbarrie in the county of Waterford, esquire," and states that since the death of his father, Capt. Thomas Aston, Esq., he had been deprived of rents and profits at Killbarry, Allenkaine, the Crook and Collin in the county of Waterford, and Polmontan in the county of Catherlaghe worth £3,076, "[a]nd that he this deponent being his eldest sonn" is likely to be deprived of the farm of Kilbarry, 32 years remaining on the lease, worth £178 per annum; the Crook, worth £268, a lease of 17 years remaining worth £60 per annum; and a farm called the Collin worth £30 per annum; so his losses total about £268 per annum (Trinity College Library, Dublin, "1641 Depositions," MS 820, f. 009r). Later depositions date from 3 Feb. 1653/4 (when Edward had attained the rank of major), and other dates (MS 818, f. 221r ["aged about thirty four years"], f. 245r ["thirty four years"], and f. 274r; MS 819, ff. 039r, 042r, 043r, 044r, 209r, 269r, and 280r). All "1641 Depositions" are indexed and imaged online: 1641.tcd.ie/index.php.

Edward Aston of Kilbarry, English Protestant, and the lease of his father, Thomas, at Crook are also mentioned in Robert C. Simington, *The Civil Survey A.D. 1654-56*, 10 vols. (Dublin, 1931-61), 6:161 (Parish of Crook and Kil St. Nicholas, leased from Sir Peter Ayleward) and 6:190 (Kilbarry Parish, leased from Thomas Wadding of Duag). Part of Thomas

v SIMON ASTON, Citizen and Grocer of London (made free in 1621),³⁹ b. ca. 1598 (age 40 in 1638), d. testate, as a resident of St. Peter Westcheap,⁴⁰ bur. Devizes St. Mary, Wiltshire, 6 Aug. 1638;⁴¹ m. (by license) St. Peter Westcheap, London, 2 June 1629, ELIZABETH WHEELER, daughter of John Wheeler, Citizen and Grocer of London, and sister of Sir William Wheeler, Baronet.⁴² Simon Aston's monumental inscription is described as follows:

Aston's diary was published in Philip Herbert Hore, *History of the Town and County of Wexford . . .* (London, 1904), along with other pertinent documents and accounts of the rebellion. A letter from Maj. Edward Aston to Capt. Clarke of the *Jacqueline* dated at Dublin, 9 Feb. 164[5/6], about Irish affairs concerning the Admiralty, is preserved in the State Papers. The Protestant government was planning on "transporting" 3,000 Irish from Wexford (where Aston had interests). Of Aston, Capt. Robert Clarke wrote, "He is said to be honest." Aston had no love for the non-Protestant Irish, calling them "the bloodthirsty miscreants, the Irish." He believed that many of the local Protestants would quickly join forces when they heard he was "on board," and that provisions should be made in advance for them, and for Edward to command a company of 100 himself, or to command a regiment if enough men could be raised (*Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland of the Reign of Charles I*, 4 vols. [London, 1900-3], 2:437-38).

³⁸ See note 37.

³⁹ "Index to Freemen," Records of the Grocers' Company of London [FHL film #1850672]. Simon took on three apprentices between 1629 and his death. Cliff Webb, *Grocers' Company Apprenticeships, 1629-1800*, London Livery Company Apprenticeship Registers, 48 (London, 2009), 58, 80, and 121; his brother Robert Aston also took on three apprentices (pp. 41, 45, and 178).

⁴⁰ PCC wills, Lee (1638), quire 99, f. 373 [ancestry.com].

⁴¹ Devizes St. Mary parish register [FHL film #1279447, item 9]. "Simon Aston," *Wiltshire Notes and Queries* 2(1896-98):249, states the date as 4 Aug.

⁴² St. Peter Westcheap, London, parish registers [images, ancestry.com]. Her father, John Wheeler, has been confused with John Wheler, goldsmith, of London and Martin Hussingtree, Worcs., who m. Mary Herrick (see, for example, G. E. Cokayne, *Complete Baronetage*, 5 vols. plus index [Exeter, Eng., 1900-9], 3:106). Elizabeth's father had been secretary to the Merchant Adventurers, residing in Zeeland and the Low Countries for a time (where her eldest brother, William Wheeler, was born). This is made clear in the will of her uncle Nicholas Wheeler, Citizen and Draper, made 28 Jan. 1618/9, proved 14 Dec. 1619 (PCC wills, Parker [1619], quire 134, f. 327), who made large bequests "to the children of my brother John p[er] his first wife M[ist]ris Anne Ingeler, daughter of Mr Harvye of Richmond" and "the three other children of his last wif[e] resident at Dort in Holland[e] . . ." John Wheeler had m. (1) Anne Harvey, widow of James Engler of Linkfield, Surrey, and sister of Lord Hervey of Rosse, Ireland, and m. (2) Sarah — (W. Bruce Bannerman, *Visitations of the County of Surrey . . . 1530 . . . 1572 . . . [a]nd 1623*, Harleian Soc. Pubs., 43 [London, 1899], 114; Bower March, "The Parentage of Sir William Wheler, Knight and Baronet," *The Genealogist*, new ser. 25[1909]:209-15; "Sir William Wheeler (c. 1601-66), of Leigh Manor Westbury, Wilts., and Rogers House Cannon Row, Westminster," History of Parliament [historyofparliamentonline.org]; Frederick Arthur Crisp, ed., *Visitation of England and Wales: Notes*, 12 vols. [London, 1896-1917], MS notes opposite 8:34 [Crisp's annotated copy, digitized at familysearch.org]).

and Grocer of London (made free in 1621),³⁹ b. ca. d. testate, as a resident of St. Peter Westcheap,⁴⁰ Wiltshire, 6 Aug. 1638;⁴¹ m. (by license) St. Pe[n], 2 June 1629, ELIZABETH WHEELER, daughter en and Grocer of London, and sister of Sir Wil[liam].⁴² Simon Aston's monumental inscription is de-

bert Hore, *History of the Town and County of Wexford*, 2 vols. [1845] [reprint, 1970]. The documents and accounts of the rebellion. . . . Clarke of the *Jacqueline* dated at Dublin, 9 Feb. 1641, is preserved in the State Papers. The "transporting" 3,000 Irish from Wexford (where Robert Clarke wrote, "He is said to be honest.") Aston, calling them "the bloodthirsty miscreants, the Protestants would quickly join forces when they ions should be made in advance for them, and for myself, or to command a regiment if enough men . . . Relating to Ireland of the Reign of Charles I, 4 vols.

he Grocers' Company of London [FHL film between 1629 and his death. Cliff Webb, *Grocers'* in Livery Company Apprenticeship Registers, 48 (1629-1638). Robert Aston also took on three apprentices (pp.

[ancestry.com](#)].

film #1279447, item 9]. "Simon Aston," Wiltshire Notes and Queries, 2(1896-98):249. The date as 4 Aug. 1638. Her father, John Wheeler, goldsmith, of London and Martin Huss, for example, G. E. Cokayne, *Complete Baronetage*, 3:106). Elizabeth's father had been secretary to King James I and the Low Countries for a time (where her father died in 1618/9, proved 14 Dec. 1619 (PCC wills, Parishes). He bequests "to the children of my brother John, son of Mr Harveye of Richmond" and "the estate at Dord in Holland." John Wheeler had m. Dorothy Linkfield, Surrey, and sister of Lord Hervey of Bannerman, *Visitation of the County of Surrey* (1619; Pubs., 43 [London, 1899], 114; Bower March, 1619-66), of Leigh Manor Westbury, Wilts., and *History of Parliament* [history of parliament], 12 vols. 4 [Crisp's annotated copy, digitized at [familypedia.org](#)].

On floor of St. Mary's, Devizes, near south door: *Argent, a fess and in chief three lozenges sable, a crescent charged with another for difference.* "Here lieth the body of Simon Aston, Citizen and Grocer of London, the Sonne of Walter Aston, of Longdon of Stafford, Gent., w[hi]ch Symon had by Elizabeth, daughter of John Wheeler, Esqr, 5 children, who departed this life the 4th of August, 1638, being aged 40 years."⁴³

Simon Aston left a will dated 2 Aug., proved 15 Aug. 1638:

In the name of God amen I Symon Aston Cittizen and Grocer of London being weake and sickle in body butt of good and perfect memory thankes bee given unto Allmichtie God, And well considering the frailtie of the mortall life as every good Christian ought to doe, And therefore doe this Second day of August One Thousand sixhundred thirtie Eight make and declare this my last will and Testament And First I bequeath my soule into the hands of my Allmichtie Creator. . . . Secondly I doe ordayne and appointe my said deere wife Elizabeth sole Executrix . . . whome I pray and intreat to see my Children virtuouslie brought upp in the feare of God, Next I doe require her my said Executrix well and truely to pay and discharge all my debtes whither upon Bond or otherwise. . . . And after my said debtors bee paid and discharged as aforesaid and allsoe the funeral costs and legacies hereafter mencioned discharged I doe give and bequeath the Remainder of my estate whether personall or reall, in manner and forme following (that is to say), I give and bequeath unto my said Deare Wife The One Halfe and Moitye of my said estate whether personall or reall, of what nature or condic[i]on soever itt be, And the other Halfe and Moitye of my said estate, unto my children equally to be devide (Excepte the some of Fiftye Pounds of lawfull money of England w[hi]ch I give as a Legacie unto my eldest sonne William Aston)

And I do ordayne and appointe my deare and loveing Brothers William Wheeler Esqr and Robert Aston Cittizen and Grocer of London Overseers. . . . And I doe give and bequeath unto each of them the some of Tenn Pounds . . . as an expression of my love unto them. Item I give and bequeath unto Richard Nelme the some of Tenn Pounds of like lawfull money, Uppon condic'on hee doe faithfully and honestlie aide and assist my said Executrix and my said Overseers in making upp the accompts of the Shopp. Item I give unto the poore of the parish where I shall happen to be buried to be distributed unto Twenty poore people to be nominated by the Churchwardins of such parish the some of Twenty shillings, Item I give unto the poore of St. Peters parish scituatu in Cheape London the some of Fower Pounds to be distributed unto Tenn poore people of the said parish to be nominated by the Churchwardins, And lastlie I doe by theise p[re]se[n]ts revoke and disan'ull all former or other wills and bequests to any person whatsoever In witness whereof I have hereunto sett my hand and seale. . . . Item my further will is, and I doe give and bequeath unto my deare mother the some of Twenty Pounds p[er] Annu[m] to be yssuing and payable unto my saide mother during her naturall life, out of the Moity and

⁴³ "Simon Aston," *Wiltshire Notes and Queries* 2(1896-98):249. A Symon Aston m. by banns, St. Peter Cornhill, London, 16 June 1637, Elizabeth Colles.

Halfe of my estate given and bequeathed unto my deare wife as aforesaid And the said Annuitie to be paid and payable by my said wife unto my said mother Quarterly, and every quarter att the most usual Feast of the yeare (that is to say Michaelmas, Christmas, the Annunciacion and the Feast of St John Baptist) by equall porcions. In witness whereof I have hereunto sett my hand and seale as aforesaid, p[er] me Symon Aston. Sealed and delivered in the presence of us James Smith, Thomas Lavender and John Hope.⁴⁴

Children of Simon and Elizabeth (Wheeler) Aston:⁴⁵ 1. *Elizabeth Aston*, bp. St. Peter Westcheap, 15 [not 25] Aug. 1630. 2. *William Aston*, b. say 1632 [by 1634]. 3. *Anne Aston*, b. say 1634 [by 1634]. 4. *Simon Aston*, b. say 1635. 5. *Robert Aston*, b. say 1636-37. 6. *Sarah Aston*, b. say 1638 (before 2 Aug.), living, unmarried, 1665.⁴⁶

vi ROBERT ASTON, Citizen and Grocer of London (made free in 1621),⁴⁷ b. say 1600, bur. St. Mary Magdalen Milk Street, London, 22 Dec. 1643 ("in the Newe Vault");⁴⁸ m. SARAH STOURTON, daughter of John Stourton of Stourton, Nottinghamshire.⁴⁹ Robert Aston's will:

In the name of God Amen The Thirteenth daye of December 1643, In the nineteenth year of the raigne of our Soveraigne Lord Charles, by the Grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland defendour of the Fayth &c: I Robert Aston Cittizen, and Grocer of London, beinge and weake of Bodie, butt of p[er]fect mynd and memorie, praysed bee God; doe make and declare this my last Will and Testament in Writeinge in manner and forme followeinge. First and principally, I Commend my soule into the hands of Almighty God; hopeinge and beleevinge to have full Remission of all my synnes, and transgressions, by, and through the only merritts and righteousnes of my alone Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ And my body I Committe to the Earth, to be decently buried, att the discretion of my Executrix hereafter named. And as touching my worldly estate, the greatest part thereof Consistinge of my debts due and oweinge unto mee by sundrey Chapmen, and other persons, I will that as soone as the same maie bee received, that all such debts as I shall owe att the tyme of my decease, bee payed, and satisfied.

And the rest and residue of my Estate whatsoever, after my debts payed, and funeral Charges deducted; I give and bequeath the same as followeth Viz'. First I give to my Sister Katherine, and to her Husband my Brother in

⁴⁴ PCC wills, Lee (1638), quire 99, f. 373.

⁴⁵ Only Elizabeth's baptism has been found; there appears to be a gap in the parish registers of St. Peter Westcheap in the 1630s. None of the children were baptized at Devizes, even though their father was buried there [note 41]. Baptisms for Devizes St. John and St. Mary were checked.

⁴⁶ Sarah Aston was mentioned as a niece of Sir William Wheeler, Bart., and given £50 in his will of 20 June 1665, proved 6 July 1667 (PCC wills, Carr [1667], quire, 96, f. 299).

⁴⁷ "Index to Freemen," Records of the Grocers' Company of London [FHL film #1850672].

⁴⁸ St. Mary Magdalen Milk Street, London, parish register [images, ancestry.com].

⁴⁹ Howard and Chester, *Visitation of London* [note 1], 1:29.

n and bequeathed unto my deare wife as aforesaid
to be paid and payable by my said wife unto my said
every quarter att the most usual Feast of the year
as, Christmas, the Annunciacion and the Feast of
all porcions. In witness whereof I have hereunto set
my said p[er] me Symon Aston. Sealed and deliv-
ed us James Smith, Thomas Lavender and John

and Elizabeth (Wheeler) Aston:⁴⁵ 1. *Elizabeth*
tcheap, 15 [not 25] Aug. 1630. 2. *William Aston*,
3. *Anne Aston*, b. say 1634 [by 1634]. 4. *Simon*
Aston, b. say 1636–37. 6. *Sarah Aston*, b.
living, unmarried, 1665.⁴⁶

nd Grocer of London (made free in 1621),⁴⁷ b.
Magdalen Milk Street, London, 22 Dec. 1643
⁴⁸ m. SARAH STOURTON, daughter of John
Hertfordshire.⁴⁹ Robert Aston's will:

en The Thirteenth daye of December 1643, In
raigne of our Soveraigne Lord Charles, by the
land, Scotland, France, and Ireland defendor of
on Citizen, and Grocer of London, beinge and
ffect mynd and memorie, prayed bee God; doe
st Will and Testament in Writeinge in manner
and principally, I Command my soule into the
einge and beleevinge to have full Remission of
ssions, by, and through the only merritts and
vour and Redeemer Jesus Christ And my body
e decently buried, att the discretion of my Ex-
d as touching my worldly estate, the greatest
y debts due and oweinge unto mee by sundrey
I will that as soone as the same maie bee re-
I shall owe att the tyme of my decease, bee

my Estate whatsoever, after my debts payed,
; I give and bequeath the same as followeth
atherine, and to her Husband my Brother in

here appears to be a gap in the parish regis-
the children were baptized at Devizes, even
aptisms for Devizes St. John and St. Mary

William Wheeler, Bart., and given £50 in
ills, Carr [1667], quire, 96, f. 299).
ers' Company of London [FHL film

h register [images, ancestry.com].
e 1, 1:29.

Lawe Thomas Gerrard, Twenty pounds apiece of lawefull mony of Eng-
land; And to their Twoe daughters Mary and Joyce my Nieces Five pounds
apeece of like monie. And all the rest and residue of my personall estate of
whatt kynd or Condicion soever I Give and bequeath unto my loveinge
Wyfe Sara, Whome I make, nominate, and appoynt Executrix of this my
last Will and Testament: And I name, and make my loveinge Friends John
Leake, Anthony Webster, and Henry Raper Overseers of this my last Will;
most earnestly desyreinge them that they will bee aydinge and assisting to
my sayd Executrix by their Counsayle, paynes, and advice, touching the
ordering of this my Will. . . . Robert Aston. Signed, sealed, published, and
declared to bee my last Will and Testament in the presence of Thomas
Gerrards [sic], Katherina Le Pontru, Anne Arnum; and Francis Wiseman
Scrivenor. Proved 26 Jan. 1643[4].⁵⁰

Child of Robert and Sarah (Stourton) Aston: 1. *Sara Aston*, bp. and bur.
("in the new vault") St. Mary Magdalen Milk Street, 19 Nov. 1635.⁵¹

EDWARD ASTON, b. say 1604, d. before 1634, apparently without issue.
The registers of Longdon are lost for the period of his birth.

VII. WALTER¹ ASTON, b. ca. 1606–7 (aged 49 at his death on 6 April 1656), the
immigrant to Virginia; m. HANNAH JORDAN.⁵²

APPENDIX: WALTER ASTON OF STANDON AND LONGDON

I. ROBERT ASTON, of unknown origin, was instituted as rector of Standon, Staffordshire, in December 1570.⁵³ He was buried at Standon on 2 August 1604 as "Robert Aston late p[ar]son of Standon." Robert married at Standon 13 February 157[3/]4, MARY BROUGHTON, "daughr of Mary Broughton widdow." The bride's mother, Mary Broughton, widow, was buried at Standon, 2 February 158[2/]3.⁵⁴ The bride's parents were apparently Roger and Mary (Halcot/Holcott) Broughton; a brother of Roger Broughton, Richard Broughton, had married Katherine Aston, a member of the family of Aston of Aston, Cheshire.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ London Metropolitan Archives and Guildhall Library, MS 9172/51, will no. 144 [images, ancestry.com]; Commissary Court of London, v. 29, f. 209 [FHL film #94110]. Robert Aston was an inhabitant in St. Mary Magdalen Milk Street in 1638, but Thomas Gerrard was not (T. C. Dale, *The Inhabitants of London in 1638* [London, 1931], 137).

⁵¹ St. Mary Magdalen Milk Street, London, parish register [images, ancestry.com].

⁵² His career in Virginia, not detailed here, is discussed in Paul C. Reed, "The False English Origin of Lieutenant-Colonel Walter Aston of Charles City County, Virginia" [note 2], and in more detail in Boddie, *Virginia Historical Genealogies* [note 1].

⁵³ Edward Salt, *The History of Standon: Parish, Manour, and Church* (Birmingham and London, 1888), 155.

⁵⁴ Standon, Staffordshire, parish registers [images, findmypast.com].

⁵⁵ This Broughton family and its Aston connection appear in Howard and Chester, *Visitation of London* [note 1], 1:109; Salt, *History of Standon* [note 51], 161; and H. Sydney Grazebrook, *The Heraldic Visitations of Staffordshire . . . 1614, and . . . 1663–64* (London,

Robert Aston was both rector of Standon and vicar of Alstonfield. One Elizabethan clergy list describes him as having no degree and no license to preach.⁵⁶ A more personal account of "The Lamentable Estate of the Ministry in Staffordshire" in 1604 describes the vicar of Alstonfield, Mr. Robert Aston, as a non-resident, "pluralitant, a grievous swearer, whoremaster, and drunkard, and very unlearned," and not a preacher. The same description is given of Robert in the account for Standon.⁵⁷ Robert Aston was vicar of Alstonfield from 1564 until his death in 1604, but Robert had curates serve at Alstonfield in that period.⁵⁸

"Roger Broughton of Charleton within the Dioces of Coventre and Lichefeld" made a will 24 January 1573/[4], proved 7 October 1574. By it he requested burial "in the churche of Stanndon," and left to "everie one of my daughters" £6 13s. 4d., without naming them.⁵⁹ "Mary Broughton of Walford in the p[ar]ishe of Standon w[i]thin the Dioces of Coventry and Lichfeild late wife of Roger Broughton deceased" made her will 20 April 1584, which was proved 5 May 1585. By it she gave to "my daughter Mary Aston nowe the wief of Robert Aston" ten marks, provided that all expenses could be covered by the testatrix's estate. She named "Robert Aston clerk p[ar]son of Standon my sonne in lawe" as an overseer.⁶⁰

Robert Aston died intestate in 1604. His goods were appraised by George Broughton, gent., William Short, and Henry Cawdwell at the modest sum of £61 17s. 8d., with possessions more typical of a modest farmer than of a clergyman. On 17 August 1604, Mary Aston, relict of the deceased, renounced administration in favor of their son Walter Aston of Elford,⁶¹ Staffordshire, yeoman, who posted bond for tuition of Robert's minor children, Katherine, Elizabeth, Margaret, and Dorothy Aston.⁶²

1885), 59. Rector Robert Aston of Standon cannot readily be connected to known kin of Katherine Aston of Aston, although she did have various kinsmen named *Robert* who can be traced in John Paul Rylands, ed., *The Visitation of Cheshire in the Year 1580*, Harleian Soc. Pubs., 18 (London, 1882), 16; George J. Armytage and J. Paul Rylands, *Pedigrees Made at the Visitation of Cheshire, 1613*, Lancashire and Cheshire Record Soc., 58 (London, 1909), 12, "Aston of Aston"; George Ormerod, *History of the County Palatine of Chester*, ed. Thomas Helsby, 2 vols. (London, 1882), 1:723.

⁵⁶ "An Elizabethan Clergy List of the Diocese of Lichfield," *Journal of the Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Society* 6(1884):162.

⁵⁷ "A Puritan Survey of the Church in Staffordshire in 1604," *English Historical Review* 26(1911):342, 352.

⁵⁸ [Victoria] *History of the County of Stafford*, 11 vols. (London, 1908-2013), 7:22.

⁵⁹ PCC wills, Martyn (1574), quire 36, f. 285v.

⁶⁰ PCC wills, Brudenell (1585), quire 22, f. 173.

⁶¹ Corrected in the original from *Standon*.

⁶² Consistory Court of Lichfield, original wills [and administrations], letter "A", 1600-1612 [FHL film #95295]; Act Books, 10:144 (17 Aug. 1604) [FHL film #95277].

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she named "Robert Aston
overseen."⁶⁸

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Deed-Pastigrees Made at the
(London, 1909), 12,
Chester, ed. Thomas

of the Derbyshire Ar-
Historical Review

37:22.

ter "A", 1600-

children of Robert and Mary (Broughton) Aston, bp. and bur. Standon, co. Stafford.⁶³

MARY ASTON, bp. 9 Feb. 157[5/]6, bur. 4 March 157[5/]6.

WALTER ASTON, bp. 25 Jan. 157[6/]7; m. ALICE —.

ANNE ASTON, bp. 14 June 1578; poss. m. Standon, Oct. 1604, JOHN
GREENWOOD.

ROBERT ASTON, bp. 8 Oct. 1580, poss. bur. Standon, 21 July 1669; poss.
m. ISABELL —. Children: 1. *Alice Aston*, bp. 27 Feb. 1610[1]. 2. *Anne*
Aston, bp. 26 Dec. 1613. 3. *Humphrey Aston* [no parents recorded in the
year of his bp.], bp. 1616. 4. *Phillip Aston*, bp. 11 July 1619.

RICHARD ASTON, bp. 2 Oct. 1581, bur. 19 Dec. 158[1].⁶⁴

KATHERINE ASTON, bp. 15 March 158[2/]3, living 1604.

ELIZABETH ASTON, bp. 22 June 1584, apparently still unmarried in 1622
(will of Edward Boughton). She was not the Elizabeth Aston who m.
Standon, 4 Sept. 1613, Humphrey Vise, gent. (that Elizabeth was
daughter of Edward Aston, gent., servant to the Earl of Essex).⁶⁵

MARGARET ASTON, bp. 21 Dec. 158[5], apparently still unmarried in 1622.

DOROTHY ASTON, bp. 15 Aug. 1589, living 1604.

WALTER ASTON was born on the manor of Standon, Staffordshire, and
baptized at Standon on 25 January 157[6/]7. Walter Aston was described as
age 56 in 1635, age 55 in 1635, and age 63 in 1641.⁶⁶ He died at Longdon, Sta-
ffordshire, before 25 January 1646/7 (possibly as early as 1643 or 1644—
"about 8 yeares since" in the lawsuit of 1651–52).⁶⁷ He married ALICE —,
who was his wife in February 1609/10. He was styled "gentleman" in 1635,
1641, and 1651 (after his death).⁶⁸ His widow, Alice, married, second, —

⁶³ Standon, Staffordshire, parish registers [images, findmypast.com]; W. P. W. Philli-
more, gen. ed., *Standon Parish Register, 1558 to 1812*, Stafford Parish Register Soc., 1 (London,
1902). Some of the register is transcribed in Salt, *History of Standon* [note 53].

⁶⁴ Entries in the Standon register prior to 1601 are grouped in years beginning in Advent [16
Nov.]. Richard's burial is entered under 1582; the baptism of his sister Margaret is under 1586.

⁶⁵ H. Sydney Grazebrook, *Heraldic Visitations of Staffordshire . . . 1614, and . . . 1663–64*
(London, 1885), 295, states that Humphrey Vise of Staundon, age 67, m. (1) Elizabeth Aston,
daughter of Edward Aston of Charleton, Staffordshire. Humphrey Vise, son of William, was bp.
Standon, 25 Aug. 1585. Elizabeth Aston, "daughter of Edward gent & Margaret," was bur.
Standon, 1 June 1596. Elizabeth Aston, "daughter of Edward Aston gent & serv[an]t to the
Right Honble. Earl of Essex" was bp. there, 23 Dec. 159[7]. Edward Aston, gent., and servant to
"the Earle of Essex, at Dublinge [Dublin]," was bur. 8 Sept. 1598. Margaret Aston, widow, was
bur. 21 Aug. 1634. This was the only other Aston family recorded in Standon in that period.

⁶⁶ Chancery Depositions, TNA C 21/B10/6 (1635), C 21/B23/17 (1635), and C 21/B3/18
(1641), abstr. by Simon Neal.

⁶⁷ Lichfield Peculiars, Original Wills and Administrations, Letter "A" [FHL film
#173020]; on the lawsuit see note 5.

⁶⁸ See notes 5, 66.

Proctor; she married, third, Richard Greatrix, with whom she was subpoenaed in the 1651 lawsuit brought by her son-in-law Zachary Kirke.⁶⁹

In the court baron of Andrew Vise, Esq., held at Staundon (alias Stawne), in 17 James [1619 or 1620], the jury presented and fined Humfrey Vyse (gent.), 2d., John Greenwood of Staundon, 2d., Walter Aston *clericus*, 2d., and others, for digging "on the waste of the land of the lord for a foundation for a mill, and have carried away the same land at their own will without licence of the lord."⁷⁰

Three wills of Walter's mother's Broughton kin substantiate life events and relationships in this Aston family. By his will dated 2 April 1622, proved 24 January 1622/3, "Thomas Broughton of Bowers in the p[ar]ishe of Stanndon in the Countie of Stafforde gent" gave "unto my Cosen Walter Aston my short sword."⁷¹ By his will dated 10 May, 20 James I [1622], proved 7 October 1622, "Edward Broughton of Stanndon in the Countie of Staff gent" left "unto my Cosen Walter Aston, Robert Aston, Elizabeth Aston & Margarett Aston Eight poundes to be equally devided by forty shillinges a peece."⁷² By her will dated 25 February, 12 Charles I [1636/7], proved 13 June 1637, "Anne Broughton of the Hall of Standon in the Countie of Stafford Spinster" left "to my Cosin Walter Aston . . . Fortie shillinges whereof there is twentie shillinges in his hand alreadie."⁷³

Walter Aston provided depositions in a number of disputes between the Bowes and Brooks families concerning inheritance of the manors or lordships of Elford and Okeley and other events.⁷⁴

In 1641, "Walter Aston of Longdon in the countie of Staff gent aged threescore and three yeares or thereaboutes" recited his lifetime migrations as testimony in a chancery deposition:

[1577/8] b. at the Manor of Standon

[1598] age ca. 20, moved to live with Sir John Bowes [of Elford]⁷⁵

⁶⁹ See note 5.

⁷⁰ Salt, *History of Standon* [note 51], 110. It is unclear why Walter is referred to as *clericus* (though as already noted, his father, Robert Aston, had served as a cleric without university degree or license to preach). Salt wondered if the father, Robert Aston, was meant, but Robert had been dead fifteen years.

⁷¹ PCC wills, Swann (1623), quire 5, f. 35v.

⁷² PCC wills, Saville (1622), quire 86, f. 192.

⁷³ PCC wills, Goare (1637), quire 90, f. 254.

⁷⁴ Walter had served as servant of Richard Bowes, esq., son of Sir John Bowes, but also knew William Brookes, grandson of John Brookes, gentleman (TNA C 21/B10/6, C 21/B23/17). The Bowes family of Elford is recorded in the visitations of Staffordshire, as is the Brooke family of Haseler (buried at Elford with monumental inscriptions).

⁷⁵ Will of Sir John Bowes of Elford in the Countie of Stafford Knight, 20 Jan., 6 Jac. I [1608/9], proved 8 May 1609 (PCC wills, Dorset [1609], quire 38, f. 290), with bequests to

whom she was subpoenaed by Zachary Kirke.⁶⁹

Longdon (alias Stawne)

named Humfrey Vyse

for Aston *clericus*, 2d.

the lord for a foundation

in his own will without li-

ubstantiate life events

12 April 1622, proved

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my Cosen Walter

James I [1622],

in the Countie of

Aston, Elizabeth

divided by forty shil-

Charles I [1636/7],

London in the Coun-

try... Fortie shil-

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Spites between the

manors or lord-

of Staff gent aged

time migrations

ferred to as *clericus*
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Shropshire, as is

Jan, 6 Jac. I
bequests to

[1605] age ca. 27, after serving Bowes seven years, returned to Standon

[1608] age ca. 30, moved abroad⁷¹

[1614] age ca. 36, returned to Standon

[1620] age ca. 51, left Standon

[1644] age ca. 63, resident of Longdon⁷²

The names "Walter Aston Senior" and "Walter Aston Junior" are listed consecutively on the Longdon Protestation Return [March 1642].⁷³

Children of Walter and, perhaps, Alice (—) Aston, bp. and bur. Standon, co. Stafford:⁷⁴

i MARY ASTON, bp. 21 Feb. 1608/[9], bur. 3 March 1608/[9].

ii WALTER ASTON, bp. 22 Feb. 1609/[10] (son of Walter and Alice).

Granted administraton of his father's estate on 25 Jan. 1646/7, he d. shortly thereafter, at which point administration passed to his brother-in-law Zachary Kirke. He m. ELIZABETH —, who was bur. Lichfield St. Michael, 15 Jan. 1643/4.⁸⁰ He appears in Longdon's 1641 Protestation Return as "Walter Aston Junior."⁸¹

iii ELIZABETH ASTON, b. say 1612 (presumably abroad), bur. Lichfield St. Mary, 16 Oct. 1643;⁸² m. Lichfield St. Michael, 17 Feb. 1639/40, ZACHARY KIRKE,⁸³ bp. Lichfield St. Mary, 5 Aug. 1611, one of eight children of Samuel and Elizabeth (Wildblod) Kirke of Lichfield.⁸⁴ Zachary's will was dated 8 Feb. 1669/70, inventory 17 Dec. 1673 (including three Bibles, 12 new Turkey work chairs, 6 leather chairs, a brew house, a great deal of pewter and brass, tools, books, oils and alabaster as needed for his trade, and £99 10s. in bonds for debts others owed him).⁸⁵

many servants in his household, but none to Walter Aston, who had returned to Standon and was married by then.

⁶⁹ Two of his children, however, were bp. Standon in 1608/9 and 1609/10.

⁷⁰ See note 66. The timeline differs slightly in C 21/B10/6 [dated by Bernau].

⁷¹ Protestation Returns, 1641 (House of Lords), Longdon, Offlow Hundred, Staffordshire (likely dated the end of March 1642) [FHL film #919510]. The page for Longdon does not have a date recorded, but others in the same hundred are dated the end of March 1642.

⁷² Standon, Staffordshire, parish registers [images, findmypast.com].

⁷³ Lichfield St. Michael, Staffordshire, parish registers [images, findmypast.com].

⁷⁴ Protestation Returns, 1641 (House of Lords), Longdon, Offlow Hundred, Staffordshire (likely dated the end of March 1642) [FHL film #919510].

⁷⁵ Lichfield St. Mary, Staffordshire, parish registers [images, findmypast.com].

⁷⁶ Lichfield St. Michael, Staffordshire, parish registers [images, findmypast.com].

⁷⁷ Zachary Kirke's parents m. Lichfield St. Mary, 22 July 1610 (Lichfield St. Mary parish registers [FHL film #1068982, item 7]). The will of Joseph Kerke of Lichfield, barber surgeon, dated 12 Feb. 1646/7, proved 15 March 1646/7, specifies burial in St. Michael churchyard and mentions his brother Zacharie and Zacharie's wife [*unnamed*], brothers Clement, Samuell, William, and Richard, sister Isabell, "my wife" [*unnamed*], and cousin Nicholas Deaken. The bulk of goods and money were to be divided between brother Zacharie and mother Elizabeth Kirke, sole executrix (Peculiar of the Dean of Lichfield [FHL film #173150]).

⁷⁸ D. G. Vaisey, *Probate Inventories of Lichfield and District 1568-1680*, Staffordshire Record Soc., 4th ser., 5 (1969), 8-9, 17-18, 30, 219-21.

proved 29 July 1674.⁸⁶ A successful painter and sculptor in alabaster, Zachary was Deputy Herald for Derbyshire under William Dugdale in 1662-63.⁸⁷ In 1646, Sir William Brereton recorded "A scornefull Letter out of the Close betwixt Joseph & Zachary Kirke."⁸⁸ Zachary was responsible "for the redecoration of St. Mary's church" (1659 and 1663);⁸⁹ Overseer of Poor, Lichfield St. Mary (1664); Warden of the Conduit Lands (1666); and Sheriff (1668).⁹⁰ Zachary was "Assessed for tax on four hearths in Saddler Street."⁹¹ Zachary m. (2) Sarah —, apparently the mother of his children (bp. Lichfield St. Mary):⁹² 1. *Ursula Kirke*, bp. 24 Aug. 1647. 2. *Elizabeth Kirke*, bp. 20 Oct. 1652. 3. *Anne Kirke*, bp. 20 Sept. 1654. 4. *Charles Kirke*, bp. 24 Oct. 1655. 5. *Anne Kirke* (again), bp. 30 Nov. 1656. 6. *Zachary Kirke*, bp. 19 April 1663.⁹³ 7. *Hester Kirke*, bp. 9 Sept. 1668. 8. *Frances Kirke* (female), bp. 27 April 1671. 9. *Francis Kirke* (male), bp. 19 Dec. 1672.

- iv ALICE ASTON, m. by 1651, ROBERT SAUNDERS of Cannock Wood in the parish of Cannock, Staffordshire (immediately west of Longdon).⁹⁴

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⁸⁶ Will of Zachary Kirke of Lichfield (Peculiar of the Dean of Lichfield [FHL film #173150]), mentions loving wife, son Zachary, daughter Ursulla, and the rest of his daughters Hester, Frances, and Elizabeth Kyrke (unmarried minors). His wife and brother-in-law Henry Moore were executors; Ricart Kyrk and Francis Moore were overseers.

⁸⁷ G. D. Squibb, *Visitation of Derbyshire Begun in 1662 and Finished in 1664*, Harleian Soc. Pubs., new ser., 8 (London, 1989), xiv-xv; George Ireland and G. D. Squibb, *Dugdale's Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Visitation Papers*, Harleian Soc. Pubs., new ser., 6 (London, 1987), 1-3, 31-32.

⁸⁸ William Brereton, *A Journal of the English Civil War: The Letter Book of Sir William Brereton, Spring 1646*, ed. Joseph McKenna (London, 2012), 105, 225.

⁸⁹ Percy Laithwaite, "Hearth Tax for Lichfield (Charles II) P.R.O. Exchequer K. R. Lay Subsidies, 156/35," *Publications of the Staffordshire Record Society*, 3rd. ser., year 1936 (1936), 150.

⁹⁰ Laithwaite, "Hearth Tax for Lichfield" [note 89], 150.

⁹¹ Laithwaite, "Hearth Tax for Lichfield" [note 89], 150.

⁹² Lichfield St. Mary parish registers [FHL film #1068982]. There is an unplaced Zachary Kyrke bur. there, 16 Nov. 1655, who may be another child by the second wife.

⁹³ Lichfield St. Mary, Staffordshire, bishops' transcripts [FHL film #421567].

⁹⁴ See note 5.